MONTEREY NEWS

November 2015

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The Town

By Jill Pajka

Notes on select board meetings from September 21 through October 19.

Lake Garfield Preservation District

On October 5, the Friends of Lake Garfield (FLG) met with the select board to discuss creating a lake preservation and tax district for Lake Garfield. This area would include lakefront homes and properties with deeded lake access (stakeholders) to assess and to raise money for the health and preservation of Lake Garfield. Michael Germain of FLG and fellow member Richard Jaffe sought permission from the select board to go forward with plans for FLG to contact our state representative about the creation of a tax district to help pay for maintenance of the lake. FLG is especially advocating creating the tax district in response to the problem of invasive milfoil species the cost of which has expanded past their budget to simply keep the lake healthy.

"The management of weeds—the vacuuming—has failed," said select board member Steven Weisz, with a serious shrug. Germain and the board discussed that while there have been sporadic milfoil plants over the years, the money and effort needed to keep our lake healthy has significantly changed. "The first step [to creating a tax district] is support from the select board," explained FLG member Michael Germain. "The second step (and what they did at Lake Buel) is to create a town warrant, which would be your decision to create a town warrant," or to seek suggestions for alternatives approaches to the legislature.

Citing the Lake Buel Act passed by legislature in 1986, Germain continued, "We could use the Lake Buel Act and boilerplate it, modifying as proposed by our town." The select board and FLG confirmed that the warrant for Lake Garfield, if created, would remain a living document until it is approved and supported.

Susan Sellew

It's coming—get your wood covered, change the smoke alarm batteries, sharpen your shovels, and have plenty of tea on hand!

The board and FLG discussed how the creation of a lake preservation district would first need to be enabled by an act of state legislature, followed by a public meeting and vote by stakeholders. A two-thirds vote of 50 percent quorum of stakeholders would be required to create the district. Furthermore, the management committee, budget, assessment rate, and expenses would be voted on annually by the stakeholders.

"How does the vote work for those who can't vote in town?" asked Scott Jenssen, select board chairperson, citing a concern with taxing those who only hold deeded rights in Monterey.

"A tax district is different," explained Germain. "They can vote, in this case, and are considered legal residents [of the preservation district]." Weisz skimmed and read from the Lake Buel Act, concluding that property owners can vote and do not have to be legal residents of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

If a lake preservation and tax district is created, the district would affect approximately 35–37% of Monterey's tax base (around two hundred homes.) Similar to Lake Buel's tax district, which divides the costs per house and charges 69 cents per $1,000 assessed value, the Lake Garfield district would also divide the costs by house. The initial rate might be approximately 30 cents per thousand (or approximately $142 per year for a house assessed at $500,000.) Goose Pond, several lakes in Becket, and a few other lakes in Massachusetts have formed districts to preserve their water resources. The board and the audience agreed that one of the main differences between Lake Garfield and other local lakes is the beach, which, while on town property, is by agreement with the state a public facility, and serves camps from towns all over the Berkshires, which could affect decisions in creating the tax district.

"I'm concerned about the power being given by this decision [to create a tax district]," said Mark Gorden from the audience. "Why is so much money being set aside for the lake but the vacuuming of the weeds is still failing? Who is it that manages the lake?" The board and FLG explained that Lake Garfield is managed by the town and Harbormaster and Police Chief Gareth Backhaus. They also acknowledged that while the lake is owned by the state, the state takes no responsibility in maintaining the lake.

An opposing audience member insisted that the weeds were not a problem five years prior and the weed situation has actually been improving with each year. Germain explained further, "The milfoil spread from one acre to ten acres in one year. The state is not going to help. We have to help ourselves in this." Last year, FLG and their lake scientist discovered 1.5 acre patch of milfoil. In the one year it took to raise funds and produce permits for its removal, the milfoil had expanded to ten acres.

The board unanimously granted support to the Friends of Lake Garfield to move forward with their proposal to the state legislature, with the caveat that all documents drafted by FLG must be reviewed by the board prior to submission.

WiredWest and MBI Shed Light on Broadband Plans

This month, the select board met with representatives from WiredWest and the Mass Broadband Institute (MBI) to discuss plans to bring affordable, reliable, high-speed internet, phone, and television to local homes and businesses in Monterey. Many in town are familiar with WiredWest, the cooperative of thirty-two small towns working to build and operate a regional fiber-optic network for western Massachusetts and its residents.

Newer to town is MBI, the state entity responsible for broadband mapping and availability, which is set to expand broadband connectivity to over 120 communities in western and north central Massachusetts. Created in 2008 by Massachusetts governor Deval Patrick and the state legislature, MBI serves to extend broadband access across the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. Since July 2015, WiredWest and MBI have been working collectively to bring broadband internet to our towns.

During the meeting, MBI director Eric Nakajima described MBI as "the agent of state funds for broadband" as he explained their mission to build out broadband in western Massachusetts, most significantly to us in Monterey. "Our goal is to get to the point of building the network in Monterey," reasoned Nakajima, "to construct it, give control to the town operators, and then, essentially, take a step back."

Reviewing the report containing a timeline for building the network, select board member Kenn Basler asked, "When can we hope to get service in Monterey?"

"The timeline is thirty months to 'go light' on the first town," responded WiredWest alternate delegate Larry Klein.

"'Go light' meaning?" inquired Basler.

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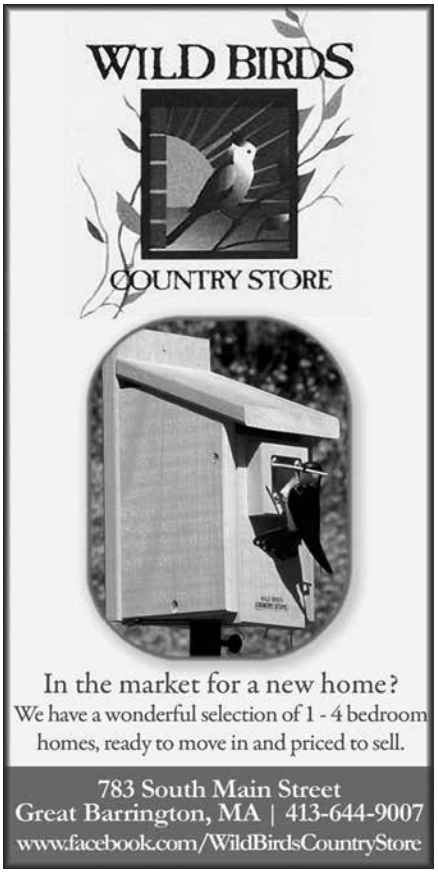
"To turn 'on' and make ready for internet and service," confirmed Klein.

According to the report, the first town should be ready 'go light' and be turned 'on' by spring 2018. The final town should have service eighteen months later.

The Plan

Earlier in the month, WiredWest met with the select board without MBI in attendance. During their meeting, WiredWest presented the board with the predicted cost, the "fail-safe" provisions of the system, and other updates based on previous meetings and reports between WiredWest and MBI.

Considering the reasoning behind working with a state entity like MBI, Klein explained, "Universally, legislators stood up on each town's behalf and for WiredWest…. Unfortunately, the $40 million for this project couldn't be given to just anyone, so they selected a state representative to 'shepherd' this." Essentially, without MBI's partnership or the state representative assigned to the project, WiredWest wouldn't have had the backing from the state necessary to provide a network or its services to Monterey.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WiredWest also noted to the select board the difference between MBI's past designs for building the broadband networks in contrast to WiredWest's own plans in design. While MBI is responsible for structuring the interval lines of service (the design of the lines and connections), WiredWest is hoping to alter past designs in order to create and connect a system of "green towns," which will be considered in the service network. These "green towns" will be supported by an equipment "hut" or "huts." Every WiredWest town will host a hut, and each hut will hold the necessary electronics serving the town. Furthermore, the huts will be connected to larger cities such as Albany, Boston, or Springfield in order to power and provide service for the thirty-two towns and thirty-two connections.

This plan, "is the only cost-efficient way and operationally-efficient method," explained Klein. "But MBI won't like it; they're trying to gain back the money they have lost in the past and a monthly $1,200 connection fee which equals $40,000 per month from all thirty-two towns. They won't have that with our approach." Apparently, the system outlined by WiredWest would be more cost efficient for Monterey but would lead to less money given back to the state.

As of October 5, the Massachusetts Broadband Institute is still responsible for the design and building of the interval lines of service. Still, WiredWest is speaking up in the hopes to be a part of the design process.

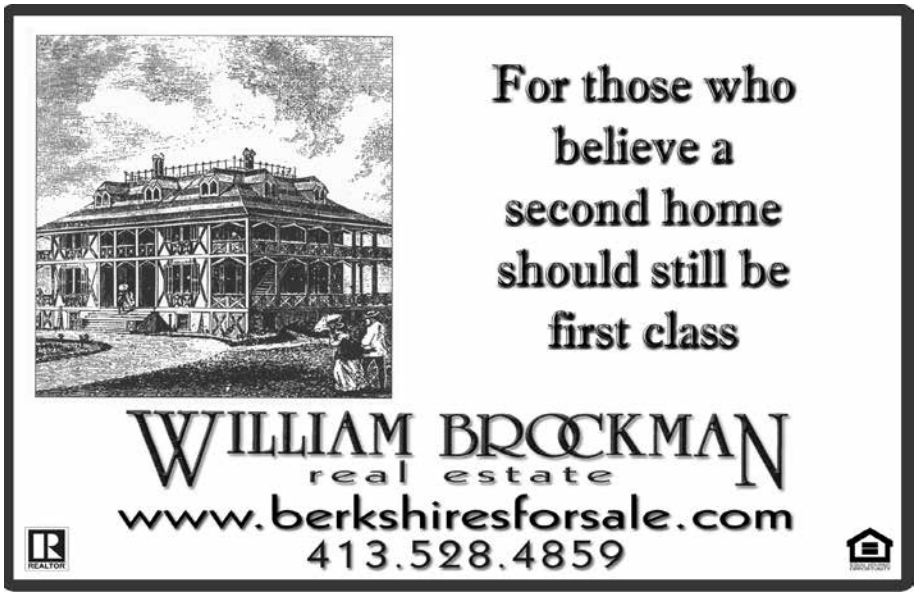
"Initially, we didn't have a voice," said Klein. "Now, we're allowed to have a voice."

School District Over-Assessment

The select board discussed the error made by Southern Berkshire Regional School District (SBRSD) that over-assessed the Monterey School by $120,000. Egremont, Sheffield, and New Marlborough were incorrectly assessed as well. In response to the over-assessment, the select board met with Stanley Ross and Don Clawson of the Finance Committee on October 5 to continue discussion regarding the error and to determine plans to handle the situation.

Select board member Steve Weisz proposed a meeting with Egremont, as they were also over-assessed. Weisz stated that Monterey should be credited our over-assessment and that the towns that were under-assessed should be required to go to town meeting to request the additional funds. Clawson agreed, suggesting the Massachusetts Department of Revenues (DOR) legal department should be contacted for additional support in dealing with situations such as these. Select board chair Scott Jenssen agreed to contact DOR.

"We just want our money back, that's all," joked Ross, confirming that the state is aware of the amount of money involved in the over-assessment of Monterey. "$120,000 compared to the whole district budget and whole school is small money," continued Ross. >



Jenssen argued against asking for the money back, saying, "Well, you can't go back [to the state] and ask for additional money." Clawson determined that if the money were returned to the town, it would be considered "free cash" but could not be spent on anything else but the school. Furthermore, the taxpayers have already been taxed. The select board, Clawson, and Ross discussed whether the money should be loaned, as the school committee had previously proposed. Weisz insisted that because the school had discovered $216,000 to cut from the budget, they could certainly look closer at their budget and possibly find more to cut.

School Committee

Also on October 5, school committe representative Maria Rundle met with the select board to discuss the future of the Monterey School building, its potential program, and to relay information discussed by the school committee to the board. Earlier the school committee rescinded their agreement to match funds to repair the Monterey School because it was not in accordance with the district agreement. It turns out it was also a violation to not have a program in Monterey this year. Families that had intended for their children to attend the school were told to send their kids to New Marlborough instead.

Rundle confirmed that the school committee had researched the legal aspects of the assessment error and determined that their proposal to correct the assessment had met what was suggested by the state. Acknowledging the misassessment, she argued that the Monterey School program shouldn't be used as leverage to resolve the error.

According to Rundle, the school committee doesn't expect that New Marlborough and Sheffield will go to town meeting to request the additional funds for the under-assessed amount. Furthermore, the Monterey school committee cannot legally enter into an agreement with the board of another town of a regional school district. However, she maintained that the school committee is honoring the work that needs to be completed and assures the select board that while the agreement is valid… there were problems with the vote taken..

"Where are we with the school repairs?" she asked the select board.

The select board paused and Scott Jenssen sighed, "There is no access point. I can't even state publicly what I think about that building." Jenssen explained that while the building inspector has deemed it safe, he has not been able to enter the building to assess issues under the bathroom floor. No estimate can be be provided yet.

"Can we get a program in the school?" asked Rundle. "Could the Early Childhood Committee?"

"The program should not precede the building. To do it now is premature," responded select board member Kenn Basler. "The money, the $10,000 has been appropriated for the building and the program for February 1."

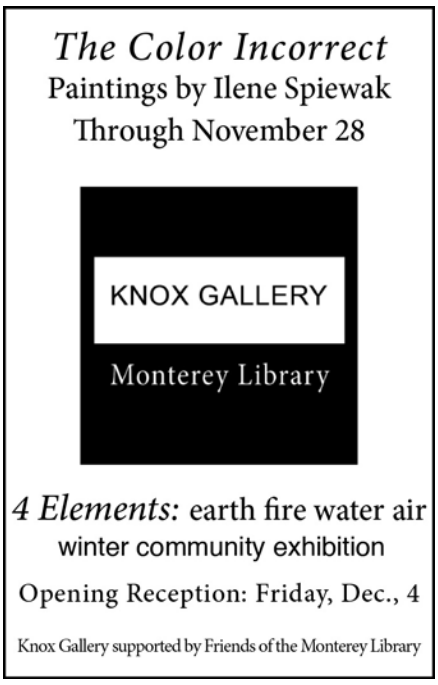
"$10,000 is part of their good faith… investing in a building is not a good investment. They need to create a program," said Rundle. The board and Rundle discussed the idea of having a vote to ensure a program for next year, prior to any work beginning on the building. Unfortunately, pre-K is already out of the question due to state building requirements.

"And if there's no program, or teacher, they [the school district] have broken our contract," stated Jenssen.

Jenssen suggested that Monterey hold their decision about what to do with the over-assessment until the district determines a program for the Monterey School for 2016. "New Marlboro and Sheffield have an agenda to close the Monterey School." he said. "They don't care about facts or that taxpayers are paying $7 a year for the program." Rundle believes that the other towns might simply vote to close the program for good.

"It just matters to me that we are part of this and that this isn't just something that happens to us," continued Rundle.

"We agree," said Basler. "We just have a healthy skepticism. We're going to postpone any repairs on the building until February 1, until a program is created."


The Color Incorrect
Paintings by Ilene Spiewak
Through November 28
KNOX GALLERY
Monterey Library
4 Elements: earth fire water air
winter community exhibition
Opening Reception: Friday, Dec., 4
Knox Gallery supported by Friends of the Monterey Library

Transfer Station Construction

On Sept. 28, the select board met with Monterey director of operations Shawn Tryon and transfer station manager Dave Gilmore to review the plans for the new transfer station. Gilmore stated that Monterey cannot afford the building cover that is in the plans and recommends some sort of cover for safety around the bins.

Tryon discussed the bids received for Phase I of the new transfer station which were much higher than expected based on the preliminary estimates of $160,000. He recommended pausing any further bid acceptance and rebidding in February. Those who bid will be sent letters about the rebid in the mail. The board also acknowledged that concrete pouring will be paused until the bidding has began again and requested that Tryon create a preliminary budget for FY17 in the meantime.

First Fifteen

This month, Kenn Basler suggested that the first fifteen minutes of every select board meeting be set aside for town officials and their proposed discussions. The meeting agenda will still list who is scheduled to meet with the select board and the topics that will be discussed so that the general public remains informed. Department heads and officials should contact Melissa Noe by the Wednesday morning before the Monday select board meeting about the 4:15-4:30 p.m. time slot.

Conservation Commission

The Conservation Commission requested that the select board approve site visits and continuing education as eligible items to claim under the Senior Tax Work Off Abatement Program. The board unanimously determined that this would be a small token for those eligible who take on the "enormous" burdens that are asked of volunteers on the various boards and commissions.

November at the Knox Gallery

The Monterey Library is all about color this month. Even as fall foliage wanes, the Knox Gallery is overflowing with Ilene Spiewak's color-drenched paintings. *The Color Incorrect* opened October 16, with a well-attended reception the next evening. Ilene's paintings are built of layers of washes and bold color, creating subtle irregularities of composition on the canvas. She pushes the boundaries of this exploration to create tension and informed passion, breaching staid boundaries of painted images.

A West Stockbridge-based painter, therapist, and educator, the artist states that she makes images from "a near non-representational position, moving toward abstraction." She works on two or three canvases at a time "creating forms and shapes on the canvas that may be painted out or enhanced with bold lines and washes of strong color combinations."

Be sure to see this rich and beautiful exhibit before it closes on November 28.

Winter Community Exhibit: Call for Artists and Makers

4 Elements: Earth, Fire, Water, Air, our all-inclusive winter community exhibit, will open on Friday evening, December 4, from 6 to 7:30 p.m. We hope all artists and friends will consider this impetus for new work. Once again we plan to assemble a diverse and stimulating reflection of our community and look forward to seeing what you discover.

We ask all participates to submit an "Intent to Enter" form by November 21. The form is available in the library and on the library and town websites. All instructions are on the forms. One piece of two- or three-dimensional, ready-to-display work per artist will need to be hand-delivered to the library on November 30 or December 1. The exhibit will run until January 30.

Maureen Banner

Ilene Spiewak

Thanks to the Friends of the Monterey Library for supporting the Knox Gallery and to the Massachusetts and Monterey Cultural Councils for the grants that underwrite our artists' talks. All exhibits can be viewed during library hours.

Knox Gallery, Monterey Library, www.MontereyMassLibrary.org/knox-gallery/ 452 Main Road, Monterey, MA, 413-528-3795. Facebook.com/Knox Gallery. @Knox_Gallery on Twitter.

—MaryPaul Yates

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Lake Garfield District
Organizational Meeting

The meeting will be held on December 12, at 10 a.m. in the church basement.

Any questions? Yes, indeed! For starters, just what is a lake preservation district? It's an area within which lakefront homes and properties with deeded lake access (stakeholders) are assessed with the goal of raising money for the health of the lake. There are approximately ninety-one lakefront homes and seventy-six homes with deeded lake access to Lake Garfield. Lake Buel, Goose Pond, several lakes in Becket, and many other local lakes have formed similar districts.

What's involved in forming a lake district? The creation of the district is enabled by an act of the state legislature. The stakeholders then vote in a public meeting. A two-thirds vote of a quorum of 50% of the stakeholders is required to create the district. The stakeholders vote annually on the management committee, budget, assessment rate, and expenses.

You may ask, why do we need money now for the maintenance of the lake when we did not need money before? The Friends of Lake Garfield (FLG) has raised money in the past to keep Lake Garfield healthy, but now the lake is faced with a problem that is bigger than our budget. While we have had sporadic milfoil plants over the years, suddenly last year, together with our lake scientist, we discovered a 1.5-acre dense patch not seen before. In the year that it took to raise the needed funds and get permits for removal, that 1.5-acre patch grew to ten acres. Milfoil is the fastest known aquatic invasive species. We need money to curtail this milfoil invasion.

What will the assessment cost the stakeholders? The assessment is expected to be between $0.30 to $0.40 per $1,000 of assessed property value. As an example, if a house were assessed at $400,000, the lake district assessment would be $160 for the first year. And, it's tax deductible! The costs are expected to go down over the next three to four years. Once created, the district remains in place till dissolved by the stakeholders.

We hope this has answered some of your questions. For more information, a copy of the proposed act, supporting documents, and updates, go to www.LakeGarfieldMA.com. You can also visit the Lake Garfield facebook page, and, by all means, join us at the meeting on December 12. If you can't attend the meeting, we will be attempting a webcast of the meeting. If you'd like to access the webcast, send an email to rosenhy@gmail.com for the link and instructions.

One last request: if you are a stakeholder, please send your email address, mailing address(s) and phone number(s) to Michael.Germain@baystatehealth.org so we can keep you informed and updated on important information and meeting times.

—Michael Germain & Hy Rosen
For the Friends of Lake Garfield

Democratic Town Committee
November 4

The Monterey democratic town committee invites all Democrats registered in Monterey and interested in joining the Monterey Democratic Town Committee to a meeting at 7 p.m, on November 4, in the church basement. The top thirty-five (likely, all) of those who express interest at the November 4 meeting will be on the state ballot as electors for the presidential primary, for a four-year term. After that election, the committee will organize to choose the chair and other officers.

For those not familiar with town government in Massachusetts, it might help for you to know the parties (Democratic and Republican) town committees meet to encourage and endorse candidates for town offices—and it is obvious we need a major effort in that direction, since we have lost so many important posts to resignations. Thus there is a sincere need for some of us to step up to the challenge and chart a course for the future of Monterey. (Republicans, please contact Mark Makuc to sign up for the Republican committee.)

—Barbara Swann

Transfer Station
Winter Hours

Sunday	10 a.m.–4:30 p.m.
Wednesday	8 a.m.–1 p.m.
Saturday	8 a.m.–1 p.m.

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Opening Reception:
Sat, Nov 7 2-4 PM FREE

Sat, Nov 7 8 PM
The film "Tin" - story of an 1895 mining scam. Sandisfield's **Ben Luxon** plays a featured role. $10

Sat, Nov 14 10 AM
Organics in the Landscape:
Rich Lassor and Michael Mugridge from Nature Works Land Care. $10

Sat, Nov 14 7 PM
Forever Young...?
Cabaret with **Linda Mironti**
$20

Sat, Nov 21 4 PM
The Development of Jewish Art Music with **Paul Green** $10

Sat, Nov 28 4 PM
Simon Winchester discusses his new book, "The Pacific"
(A book signing follows) $25

november

Veterans Day Observation

On Wednesday, November 11, we will gather at 10:40 a.m. for a Veterans Day observance at the World War I Memorial, in front of the Monterey Library. The public is invited to attend. For information, contact Julio Rodriguez, chairperson of the Monterey Veterans Memorial committee, at jrodrn@aol.com.

—Monterey Veterans Memorial Committee

Community Potluck Nov. 18

Aquatic Systems Restoration

Many thanks to Jean Atwater-Williams for her informative talk at the October potluck about trying to stop the Sandisfield pipeline project. She told us that the next step is gathering people to attend the November 10 public hearing at the state house in Boston at 11 a.m., in the Gardner Auditorium. The hearing is with the Joint Committee on State Administration and Regulatory Oversight (SARO) on Kinder Morgan's bill, H. 3690. State Senator Benjamin Downing and State Representative William "Smitty" Pignatelli intend to testify against H. 3690 at the beginning of the hearing, and they encourage residents, officials, and concerned parties to participate as well. Please contact Jean Atwater-Williams at atwaterwilliams@gmail.com, or by cell phone at 860-604-4323, to sign up to attend, either by bus or carpool.

We wish her well in her continuing efforts.

For the November 18 potluck supper, we have Tim Purinton, the director of the Division of Ecological Restoration, Massachusetts Department of Fish and Game. The DER works with community-based partners to restore aquatic ecosystems. DEP's ecological restorative work brings clean water, recreational opportunities, healthy commercial fisheries, and other ecosystem services to the citizens of the Commonwealth. Tim's talk will be on the state of ecological restoration in the Northeast with a focus on ongoing river and wetland restorations in the Berkshires.

This Monterey Community Potluck Dinner will be held on November 18, at 6 p.m., in the Fellowship Hall of the Monterey Meetinghouse. Please bring a dish to share with a serving utensil and a place setting and silverware for yourself. Everyone is welcome.

—Kyle Pierce

Steve Graves

The Monterey rink, located behind the Fire Company on Route 23, needs volunteers to help with assembly on Saturday, December 5, at 9:30 a.m. No experience necessary. This is a ninety-minute activity and all assistance is appreciated. The indoor rink, with a heated locker room, is enjoyed by hundreds of residents during January and February, thanks to the Monterey Fire Department, Monterey Parks Commission, Mother Nature, and volunteers.

MONTEREY LIBRARY

Monday	7–9 p.m.
Tuesday	9 a.m.–12:30 p.m.
Wednesday	2–5 p.m.
Thursday	4–6 p.m.
Friday	4–8 p.m.
Saturday	9:30 a.m.–12:30 p.m.
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StoryCorps
Listening and Telling Our Stories

On Friday, November 27, in conjunction with a national StoryCorps project, the Monterey Library will be hosting a unique event. Not familiar with StoryCorps? You can read about it at the end of this article.

We invite you to come to the library and record, on video, a conversation with family, friends, or neighbors. The topic of your conversation can be just about anything, from what you think makes Monterey such a special place, to how having a sense of place has shaped your life here. Recording stories about our neighbors and ourselves provides an opportunity to chronicle the history of our town for future generations. If you are stuck for questions to ponder before coming to the day of storytelling, there will be an information sheet complete with lots of possible story ideas at the library's front desk or on the library's website.

During your recording session, you will have up to forty minutes of uninterrupted time to talk with whomever you bring. Then, a few weeks later, you will receive a DVD of your conversation and a copy will be archived in the Monterey Library. Then, with your permission, an audio-only copy will be sent to StoryCorps, and finally a digital copy will be housed at the Library of Congress Folk Life Center in Washington D.C.

If you would like to record your story, please sign up at the Monterey Library soon, as the number of time slots is quite limited. There will be more details on the library website, MontereyMassLibrary.org. We will be discussing how to continue recording our stories as an ongoing project at the Monterey Library.

Stephen Moore

Construction is underway for Gould Farm's new one-million-BTU woodchip-fired boiler. Roger Tryon (with Dick looking on underneath the excavator arm) has been working with some of the farm's guests to prepare for pouring the slabs.

The StoryCorps Back Story

This past August, David Isay, founder of StoryCorps, spoke at the Mahaiwe, inspiring many of us to get trained as facilitators and participate in the first StoryCorps weekend in the Berkshires. Held at Berkshire Community College's Great Barrington campus, we recorded fifty-four conversations over three days, including several folks from Monterey. We realized libraries in the area could be a great place to record and archive these stories after this first session.

What is StoryCorps?

Dave Isay, a reporter for National Public Radio, opened the first StoryCorps recording booth in New York's Grand Central Terminal in 2003 with the intention of creating a quiet place where a person could honor someone who mattered to them by listening to their story. StoryCorps is now America's oral history project. Its mission is to strengthen and build the connections between people, to teach the value of listening, and to weave into the fabric of our culture the understanding that everyone's story matters. At the same time, we are creating an invaluable archive for future generations.

In twelve years StoryCorps has collected more than 62,000 interviews with over 100,000 participants from all backgrounds—the largest single collection of human voices ever gathered. Recordings are archived at the American Folklife Center at the Library of Congress so that future generations can hear the stories and the voices of today. StoryCorps shares stories on the internet and through its popular weekly NPR broadcasts, podcast, animated shorts, and best-selling books. Visit www.storycorps.org.

—Wendy Germain
StoryCorps facilitator

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Municipal Aggregation Plan Approved by DPU

On September 17, 2015, the Massachusetts Department of Public Utilities (DPU) approved Monterey's Community Choice Municipal Aggregation Plan that aims to provide residents and businesses with a fixed electricity supply rate. The approval process, which included a review and approval by the Department of Energy Resources (DOER) was completed in a very short period of t,ime. We thank the DPU, DOER, and our municipal aggregation consultants, Colonial Power Group, Inc., for all their efforts to expedite this process. Town administration is very excited to receive this approval from DPU, as it will enable us to move forward in the process to provide stability in pricing and hopefully decrease energy costs for residents, businesses, and the town of Monterey.

The town administration has obtained pricing from the market's electricity supply companies. Colonial Power Group solicited bids in late September and provided the town with rates for review before the select board entered into a formal contract. The town has been able to secure a contract with Hampshire Power before the 2015–16 winter rates escalate in November. The Hampshire Power price is 10.4 cents per kilowatt-hour, compared with National Grid's approved rate of 13.038 cents per kilowatt-hour.

This is an opt-out program. The select board has signed the contract. Eligible town residents and businesses that are not currently under contract for competitive supply pricing will automatically be enrolled in the program starting with customers' November 2015 meter reads. The program rates will be reflected in the Supplier Services section of your December 2015 National Grid bill. The Town of Monterey has mailed letters to all the eligible town customers that contain details about the new supply price and its contract duration. The letters provide eligible residents and businesses with instructions for how to opt out of the service by completing a postage-paid reply card and mailing it back to Colonial Power Group within thirty days of receipt. Residents and businesses with questions are encouraged to call Colonial Power Group at (508) 485-5858 or toll-free at (866) 485-5858.

The municipal aggregation plan is designed to address the uncertainty in electricity costs by combining the purchasing power of its residential and commercial customers and by competitively and transparently bidding that load on the open market.

The Town of Monterey can not only be proud of their municipal aggregation program but also of the product they have chosen. First, this product creates stability for the community. Hampshire Power's 10.4 cents per kilowatt-hour rate will not only produce 22% savings as compared with National Grid's winter rate but also changes the way communities procure green energy on behalf of their residents.

Wanting to deliver above and beyond what is available to the regular consumer, Hampshire Power is ready to offer Berkshire communities a first-of-its-kind product for residential users. Because the communities have a municipal aggregation in place, some behind-the-scenes set-up at ISO New England (the company that operates our power grid, administers wholesale energy markets, and does regional system planning) is required, to allow the Berkshires to receive actual hydropower for their individual load profiles. This means that the generator would be required to deliver the actual production of hydroelectricity to the Berkshire's Load Asset ID at ISO New England. Using the Load Asset ID in this fashion is a disruptive technology and a huge paradigm change from what has happened with renewable energy up to this point. Normally, a retail electric supplier would take the system mix (brown power, i.e., power created by fossil fuels) and purchase Renewable Energy Credits (RECs) to cover any power that was above the Renewable Portfolio Standard (RPS) to "green up" the load. This model means that the hydropower created is directly applied to the aggregations' load in the Berkshires.

—Monterey Select Board

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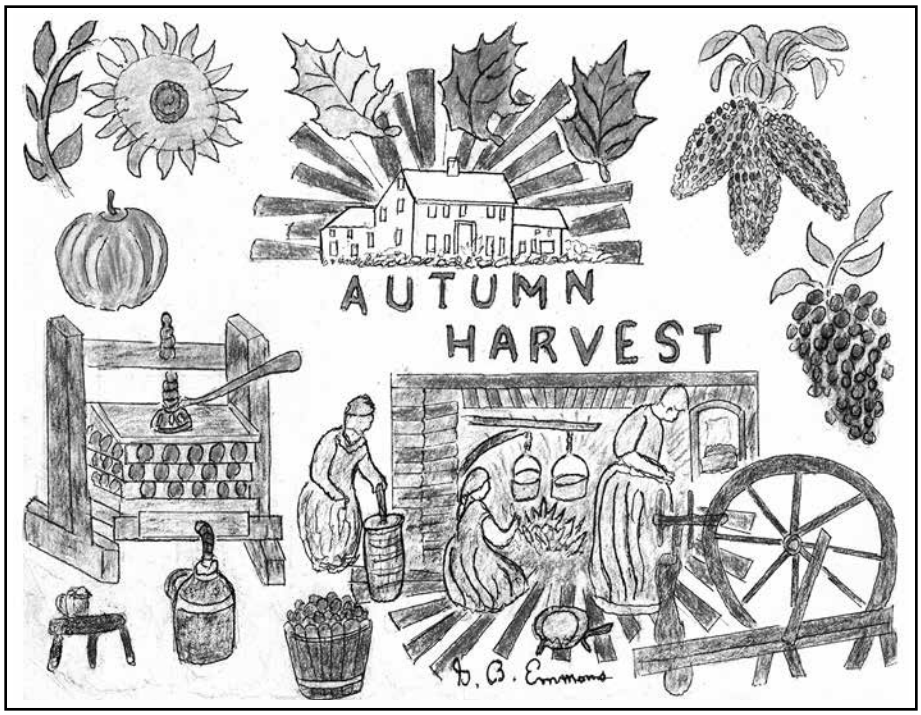
Thanksgiving Autumn Harvest



Many people today consider Thanksgiving the best holiday of the year, bringing members of their family together to bow their heads and give thanks for the blessings of life. Thanksgiving celebrates an abundant autumn harvest in the finest American tradition represented in Norman Rockwell's painting, *Freedom From Want*. The first Thanksgiving was a three-day celebration in 1621 with fifty-two English colonists and ninety Wampanoag natives. The event had its roots in the native "green corn ceremony" still practiced annually by many eastern tribes.

The green corn ceremony was linked to the second ripening of the corn. It included a *busk*, a fasting to purge the body and spirit of all impurities, to bring a sense of renewal and forgiveness, and to rekindle an awareness of the sacredness of life. At this time all offenses except for murder, rape, and theft, (not unlike the Ten Commandments), are forgiven. Then the traditional fire-keeper lit the ceremonial "grandfather fire" to bring members together much as colonists gathered around the glowing hearth of a keeping room.

Dried corn was the basic staple for the Indian dish called a *nausaump*. Corn was pounded in a mortar and boiled in water to a thick porridge with berries, fruits, clams, and native herbs. The English ate several versions of what the Indians called "stewed pompion," which was derived from a native dish consisting of stewed pumpkins. This was copied by the settlers to fill up their families in the winter months. Pumpkin pie and Indian pudding came later when English cream, flour, and sugar were added to native foods.

The Indian method of planting "three sisters"—corn, squash, and beans—as practiced in the Bidwell House colonial vegetable garden, was featured on the cover of the *Yankee Magazine* in 2002. (See two photos on page 25.) The Eastern Native Conservancy helped the museum plant heirloom tomatoes, pumpkins, and flax for spinning, as well as Indian Tonawanda tobacco. Many varieties of crops required their own specific tools. A broad representative collection is on display in the stalls and on the walls of the Bidwell Museum's old horse barn including an ancient cider press, as shown in my drawing.

The earliest variety of apple in the colonies was the Roxbury Russet that appeared shortly after 1621. Apples were used for cooking and cider, and to mind the expression "an apple a day keeps the doctor away." President John Adams drank a tankard of hard cider daily and lived to be ninety years old. Today there are hundreds of varieties of apples on approximately ten thousand acres cultivated for apples in New England alone. Hard cider is a product of growing importance to many breweries, and is preferred over beer by half of all women.

The traditional New England Thanksgiving includes apple cider to wash down the turkey, along with dishes of the "three sisters." We are taken back in time to the roots of native peoples' lives predating the arrival of the colonists. On Saturday, November 21, from 4 to 7 p.m., travel with us down a country-mile in time to the annual Bidwell House Museum's Thanksgiving party, to be held this year at the Engel's home on Algerie Road in East Otis.

—George B. Emmons
Bidwell House Museum Trustee

SUSAN M. SMITH
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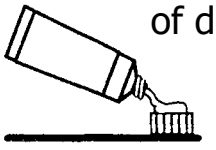

528-6520

Route 23 Monterey

Bidwell House Museum
Colonial Thanksgiving Party

The Bidwell House Museum's ninth annual fall fundraising party, Our Colonial Holiday of Thanksgiving, will be held on Saturday, November 21, from 4 to 7 p.m., at a festively decorated home at 788 Algerie Road in East Otis. Lanterns will light the way to the holiday get-together. This is the culmination of the museum's twenty-fifth anniversary season. Acclaimed musician Mark Kelso will play piano and invite guests to sing along while enjoying refreshments and seasonal treats. A silent auction will offer antiques, gifts, and other treasures—perfect for the home or holiday gifts.

The Bidwell House Museum is the Berkshires' colonial history museum; located on 192 acres of gardens, stone walls, fields, and forests. The museum, on the National Register of Historic Places, presents an authentic experience of life in the Berkshires during the 1750s. All proceeds from the party support the museum, its programs, maintenance of the historic structures, and the preservation of its open space.

The house will reopen to the public on Memorial Day 2016. The grounds are open year-round for hiking and nature watching during daylight hours. More information is available at www.bidwellhousemuseum.org or by calling 528-6888. 100 Art School Road, Monterey, MA 01245.

Tickets to the party are $50 in advance, $60 at the door. Please contact us for reservations.

P.O. Box 9
What I Am Thankful For

I have always liked Thanksgiving.

In grade school, it seemed to be the only holiday that everyone could celebrate equally. In college, it became the one time of the year when family members were reunited, if only for a few days. It wasn't until I became an adult that I realized the true essence of what the day means, and how best to celebrate it.

Thanksgiving is simply about realizing and expressing how thankful you are—

This is my fifth-year anniversary in the Town of Monterey. When I purchased my home, I knew one person in town and had no plans to spend more than a few summer weekends here.

That quickly changed for me when I began meeting all of you.

Montereyians are very welcoming folks. From my first forays to the Roadside Café, to the coffee club and general store, the people that I met were willing to chat and give this "new fellow" the opportunity to feel at home. For this, I am grateful.

In May of this year, you gave me an additional gift. You trusted me with the position of selectman. Since then, I have had the privilege to work with some of the finest town employees and fellow select board members that anyone could ever ask for.

I am a lucky fellow, indeed! For that, and the good health and happiness of my family, I am truly thankful.

—Steven Weisz

ॐ

Steven Weisz

The driver of this car, probably disbelieving the presence of a stoplight in Monterey, was probably thankful that no one seemed to be coming their way. We can all be thankful that the highway department caught the bad culvert situation on Route 23 before it became a hazard for everyone.

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Details and tickets:
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—Mark Makuc
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Steve Graves

Monterey youth All-Star baseball players enjoy post-season fall ball in September and October at Monterey's Greene Park. Informal pick-up games lead by Coach Jack Miller have taken place Saturday mornings at 10:30 for players 8 to 12 years old.

P.O. Box 9
Selling Bally Gally

What a bad idea!

I've been following the saga of the "Selling of Bally Gally" with both amusement and concern, but the one question that has never been answered is, why is Steven Jay Weisz so determined to sell the house? Ever since he's made himself known in Monterey, he's been pushing this idea forward, despite legal counsel's admonition that, in keeping with Edith Wilson's will, any funds secured from the sale of her property can only go to the scholarship fund. But Weisz, never being one to let legal details get in his way, pushes on. He claims to have had two lawyers review the will, but (as far as I know) has not named these two people or provided documentation of their opinions. His latest ploy is to use half the proceeds of the home's sale to finish the community center, a proposal that has put visions of dollar signs dancing in the heads of the Friends of WMH and, not surprisingly, garnered Weisz their support for his plan. Apparently everyone has a price.

Not only does this idea violate the terms of the will that bequeathed to Monterey the property for the community center, but it also dishonors Edith Wilson's memory and her final wishes. (Anyone out there believe in vengeful spirits?) Worse still, even if the house gets sold, which may prove impossible since banks do not like to finance houses that have no property rights, pouring half the proceeds into a project that has an insatiable appetite for funding seems short sighted and ignores other projects in Monterey that also need funding. But the unknown answer to the question of who gets the money if the property ever sells looms large. And who knows what other repercussions violating the terms of the will might have?

If Monterey is in the mood to sell property, why not consider selling the building that houses the Monterey School and use the proceeds from that sale to make the necessary modifications to Bally Gally and make it the new schoolhouse? Bally Gally sits on a better plot of land that is away from the traffic hazards of Main Road, has sufficient space for parents to safely pick up and drop off their children, and would provide more room for play and exploration. And its proximity to the community center is an added benefit. Plus, there's no pesky red tape or conditions of a will to wade through.

But one question remains: Why is Weisz so hell bent on selling Bally Gally?

—Susan Gallant

Rawson Brook Farm trick-or-treaters spotted in the village.

P.O. Box 9
Sandisfield Pipeline Hearing

On November 10 there will be a hearing of House Bill 3690 at the state house in Boston. An eastern Massachusetts legislator, Representative Garrett Bradley (D – Hingham), has introduced the bill to waive the Massachusetts constitution's Article 97 protection of Spectacle Pond and Otis State Forest.

When the land was placed in conservation (and taken off the tax rolls), Governor Patrick said, "The state's purchase of this spectacular property ensures its lasting protection and is an example of our prudent investment in the Commonwealth's rare and irreplaceable natural resources." Bill H3690 would scrap the "lasting" constitutional protection and the "prudent investment" (including the permanent loss of tax revenues to Sandisfield) so that Kinder Morgan can draw a million gallons of water from Spectacle Pond for hydrostatic testing of its new pipes (then dump the possibly contaminated water back into our aquifer) and cut and blast through nearby old-growth forest to lay another line to serve Connecticut customers. Local legislators Senator Ben Downing and Representative Smitty Pignatelli, are staunchly opposed and urge residents to come to the hearing in Boston and voice their opinion.

Written comments are strongly encouraged and should be submitted to members of the Joint Committee on State Administration and Regulatory Oversight (malegislature.gov/Committees/Joint/J25). Comments should focus primarily on the unique value of the Spectacle Pond Farm conservation parcel and why it should not be transferred for the purposes of pipeline construction. Other comments could address the negative impact this bill could have on the power of Article 97 to protect and conserve public lands. Your presence is equally important. Attend the November 10, 11 a.m., public hearing at Gardner Auditorium of the State House in Boston. Bus transportation has been arranged, and a strong show of support for Ben and Smitty and our state constitution can defeat this bill. To find out more about how and where to send your comments and/or to book your seat on the bus, go to SandisfieldTaxpayers.org

— Hilde Weisert

Maryellen Brown's mushroom fairy ring

GET ON THE BUS!

Show your support and join us on

Tuesday, Nov 10

at the State House!

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Council on Aging
October Health Fair

The Monterey Council on Aging would like to thank the Monterey community and the fifteen presenters and exhibitors for all the support during the Monterey Health Fair last month. We had great participation and feedback, with several people telling us that the information available was new and important to them. We are thinking of having another health fair next July. Let us know if you want to participate. Keep in mind, the health fair is for all ages. Once again, thank you.

— Monterey Council on Aging

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From the Meetinghouse
Shooting Star

I won't completely regret the end of this fall foliage season, though I expect a pang of loss. There's a new natural adventure on the horizon. November's traditionally a time of star-seeking instead of leaf-peeping. This year on November 17, the moon is scheduled to set in the late evening. Assuming a clear night sky, the shooting stars of the Leonid meteor shower will provide a natural spectacle of their own.

Meteor showers are named for the constellation in the part of the sky where the center of the shower is visually located. In November, that's Leo, so they're the Leonids. November's not the only month with meteor showers, not even at this time of year. October hosted the Orionids and December 13 is supposed to be the best night to look for the Geminids. But November's star show is traditionally considered the one most worth our witness.

Three of the last seventeen years (1998, 2001, and 2002) hosted spectacular Leonid shooting star shows. I dragged myself outdoors at sometime between one and three on an icy November morning. Scientific rumor had declared that would be peak viewing time for a jaw-dropper of a display. It was, too. "Life-changing awe" may sound melodramatic, but it's also accurate. Images I'll remember all my life are seared into my inner vision. Images I'm grateful to carry with me.

The chance for glimpsing a skyfall of shooting stars is always one worth taking. It's been thirteen years since the last major Leonid spectacle. This November I'm ready to see if the glory strikes again.

Mary Kate Jordan

This quilt block is traditionally called "Shooting Star."

You, too? Assuming a clear sky, plan to get outdoors on the 17th in the late evening. Invite your friends; make it a party. If it's overcast, bitterly cold or snowing, yes, party indoors. Visible or not, the Leonids will still be there, worthy of our attention.

—Mary Kate Jordan

Berkshire County Beekeepers

Berkshire County Beekeepers are presenting a free workshop about beekeeping equipment. This will focus on choosing the proper beekeeping equipment to fit your needs. Equipment to be discussed includes Langstroth hives, mediums, top bar, Warré and eight-frame hives. The presenter will be Russ Wilson.

The workshop will be on December 1, at 6 p.m., in the Monterey Meetinghouse basement. To register, email berkshirecountybeekeepers@hotmail.com.

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Monterey Pooch Parade

On October 10, twelve dogs paraded through town to make known their interest in a Monterey dog park. This was expressed in a variety of ways along their Route 23 path until they reached the community center, joined festivities, and met up with five more dog-friends. I don't have details on how many brats or beers they consumed, but many people noted the dogs' excitement at the company and their excellent behavior together. Thanks to the Octoberfest planners for welcoming our pooches to their wonderful event. We were happy as dog owners to show off our pooch parade, and alert Monterey and the select board to our ongoing interest in a dog park. Dogs and their owners need a dog park so they can play together. Interested in making this happen? We are drafting the dog park guidelines and looking at locations now. We need your help, and surely we'll love your pooch. Contact me at drpatsalomon@aol.com.

—Pat Salomon, MD

Maureen Banner

Ruth, Don, and a real pooch obviously enjoying themselves in the midst of all the pooches.

Bittersweet

Oriental bittersweet
Lives up to its name
At least the noun part
Made up of antonymic adjectives
All summer its vines enswathe
Every tree within reach
Ovate green leaves – innocent enough
But with what speed for light and height
They seek supports for their appetite
No matter how tall up they sprawl
Thickened tendrils fasten to bark
Or none available drop root sprout
To be ready for the next bigger thing
Higher and higher
To the sun I suppose
Shrouding everything that grows
Composting the parkway trees
To nurture their orange and red seeds
To feed migrating birds who will mark
Their trails by scatting these seeds
To sprout and grow and produce orange and red
Bittersweet

—Elizabeth Silk

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Octoberfest 2015—A Cheerful Afternoon

Musicians, artisans, bakers, cooks, farmers, and firefighters—an entire casting call of community life—came together on Columbus Day weekend for the third annual Monterey Octoberfest.

The fundraiser, held Saturday, October 10, drew more than four hundred people and couldn't have been more enchanting. The weather was crisp, autumnal, as if wheeled in by a set designer. The pumpkin roll was once again the hit of the day, but it had strong competition from the amazing quarter-horse rides. There were the most well-behaved adorable baby goats roaming, and a pooch parade. Monterey's own firefighters came with truck and grill. Kids got silly at the photo booth and creative with veggies at the craft table. Sounds of the day (of the musical variety) were from the talented musicians Vikki True with Sam Rosen and Peter Schneider, Peter Poirier, and Dave Dempsey and Mike Scarpo.

But the star of the show was not the bratwurst, chef-made by the Prairie Whale, or Wandering Star Brewery craft beers. Rather it was an old two-story, post-and-beam farmhouse—the Wilson-McLaughlin House—off Sandisfield Road, that only two years ago was being overtaken by weeds and weather. Now sporting new walls and floor joists, the building has been bolstered, buttoned up, and reimagined by a devoted group of volunteers as Monterey's future community center.

Much work remains. About $50,000 is needed to complete the project, says the Friends of Wilson-McLaughlin House, who are charged with restoring the building.

But in the meantime, the Friends have proven again they know how to put on a party.

Friends of Wilson-McLaughlin House are still tallying the funds raised, all the while knowing that we have done our job in the friends-raised tally! *Photos by Maureen Banner*

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1:45-2:45 pm PETER POIRIER
3:00-4:00 pm DAVE DEMPSEY & MIKE SCARPO
WHAT ELSE
FACE PAINTING
CHESS CLUB
QUARTER HORSE RIDES
CRAFT TABLE
PHOTO BOOTH
PUMPKIN ROLL
beer brats & the goodies

Old Boss

Octoberfest 2015
Thank You, Thank You

The Friends of the Wilson-McLaughlin House would like to say "thank you" to the many people and businesses who helped make Octoberfest 2015 a terrific day!

To Our Generous Sponsors:
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- Roy Carwile
- Wendy Germain

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- Bill Carlson and Annie Shatas Honey
- Rawson Brook Farm
- Berkshire Functional Fitness
- Marilyn Fracasso & Happy Acres Ranch
- Michael McDonald and his delightful goats

For Making the Day Sound Great:
- Vikki True, Sam Rosen, & Peter Schneider
- Peter Poirier
- Dave Dempsey & Mike Scarpo

For Generous Food Donations:
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- Monterey General Store
- Roadside Café and Fiona deRis
- Taft Farm
- Catherine's Chocolate
- Carol Edelman
- Linda Blaskey
- Shirley Olds
- Rosanna Murray
- Nadia Makuc
- Laurie Shaw
- Cynthia Makuc
- Sydney Brandwein

We could not have done it without you!!
— Joe Baker, Mike Banner, Cara Carroll, Mary Makuc, Laurie Shaw, Evelyn Valianos

The Quill Pigs, Apple Experts

Some of us have had a busy time in apple-land this year. We are the chompers and hoarders. Personally, I have been ungrateful enough to complain about days in the kitchen making sauce when I'd rather have been outside this long, forgiving fall. I look at the shelves of applesauce in jars, my stockpile, and feel no interest in eating any of it. I just shake my head and hope that if there is a next time with such abundance, I will know where to draw the line. I will know how much applesauce is enough.

Maybe I can be guided by my neighbor the quill pig, or porcupine. She comes every day in midafternoon, strolls purposefully to one or another of our orchard trees, and starts up. Some folks do not welcome her, wanting every apple for themselves or for market. Some have an uneducable dog coming home with a face full of quills, again and again. One person I know got to see her dog trotting down the driveway headed home with an entire porcupine clutched in her jaws. Even with all those quills in her skin and mouth, this dog would not drop the porcupine.

Most times, the quill system works well. An attacking dog needs a slap from the spear-laden tail of a porcupine, but probably once will be enough for that dog in its lifetime. Then the slow moving black-and-white creature will be left alone, just as skunks are usually left alone after one encounter. This color code says, "don't."

The apples started dropping early this year under our September Stripe tree. Macintoshes were next, then the Macouns, the Jonathans, the Snows and so on. I was bringing them down in buckets. Our dog brought them down one at a time to leave by the doorstep. Still they piled up under the trees, and I wondered if they would compost away eventually or if the yellow jackets would come and get to work, and the deer.

It was Frosty, the big porcupine, who showed up first. Soon we noticed she had a cohort, half her size, and very dark. My partner Joe was up in a tree on the ladder one day, picking for storage, and heard the porcupines chattering. Frosty, he felt, was expressing annoyance or something proprietary, very close to where he was in the tree. He also felt her tone towards young Blackling was not friendly.

We had enough apples to be generous: many buckets of keepers in the cellar, applesauce to embarrassment, and gallon jars of dried slices. I was looking every day for signs of deer in the orchard, but mostly it was those two porcupines. I watched Frosty's technique. Whether she was in a tree or on the ground, she would hold an apple with her front feet, take a first bite, then spit it out. Then another, and spit, until she had cleared off quite a bit of skin. Now she would eat in earnest, but often only about half the apple. She would drop this and start on another. Those half apples were good food for the next wave of smaller creatures. We didn't see any yellow jackets for some time, but finally they came. There were crows, too, pecking at the apples on the ground, and there were slugs and ants. Down by our doorstep, the apples left by the dog began to show many little toothmarks. One was carried into the summer kitchen, and we surprised a chipmunk snacking away on it.

Suddenly, today, there are no apples left anywhere except in our house and cellar. We'd had about twenty or so left on the end of a thin droopy branch on the >

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Jonathan. I saw Frosty yesterday walk through the orchard straight for that tree, the only one with any fruit. How could she tell? Porcupines are known to have poor vision. Had she been up the tree the day before and remembered which one it was?

Of course it turns out the scientists have been all over this one. A published conclusion tells us that porcupines have an extraordinary ability to learn complex mazes and to remember them as much as one hundred days after. Another man writes about the wonderful sense of smell porcupines have, just like all the other mammals, only not us. He says we suffer a degree of "osmic impairment," which, if it were our vision, would make us legally blind. This writer, Uldis Roze of Queens College biology department, New York, has studied the odor signal channels used by porcupines and finds urine to be the most significant. Porcupines leave a little trail, but only where it matters. We who rely on sight can detect these trails in the winter as we follow porcupines through the snow. They leave a sparse line of droplets, or sometimes a thin stream, but only where it really matters, so as not to waste this valuable signposting. Where there is a feeding tree or a resting tree (not the same thing, often) there will be increased sprinkling just at the base. Along the beaten trail in snow, from den to trees, there is no need for signals. Once at the trees, little drops tell the porcupine which is which. No doubt this is the case in our orchard.

I watched Frosty head right up the Jonathan. Once up, she didn't thesitate to pick the correct major fork and then the skinny branch where the apples hung. I was afraid she would fall, as the branch bent more and more. But she hung on tightly with her hind feet and reached forward, holding on until she could grab an apple with her teeth. She backed carefully to a good stout fork where she sat, nibbled, spat out the skin for a few bites, and then ate half the apple.

Little Blackling showed up later in the afternoon and I picked two of the Jonathans for her and tossed them gently to where she sat on the ground. Nibble, nibble, spit.

Today there is not one apple left. I don't know how they all disappeared from the ground under the trees, all the half-eaten or bruised ones we didn't carry home. There is only a little sign of deer there. I think our dog barks them away, as he does from the garden. You can scare a deer off, but not a porcupine.

I already miss them, this pair. Probably Frosty is the mother and Blackling her youngster in its first year. This is the mating season, now, and Frosty will be having another baby in May, probably. We won't have apples then, but porcupines eat many kinds of leaves, including the foliage of our sweet potato plant this year, and milkweed leaves, too, and raspberries.

The lesson? Eat as many apples as you can until they are gone and then eat something else.

—Bonner McAllester

Monterey's "Ramp to Nowhere?" Mike Banner and Roy Carwile have framed out the new entry for the community center. Once the landing is built, the ramp will have somewhere to go.

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The Best of Times

"We've never seen anything like this before." That's the likely response from most people if you question them about the new technologies, devices, and services that have become widely available in the last decade or two. It's extraordinary. It's hard to minimize how our lives have changed as a result. A very partial listing confirms this. Cell phones have been a game changer. It was once pure fantasy to believe you could talk to people wherever you or they happened to be—even across the globe. Computers and the internet have made a world of information immediately accessible and have transformed how we shop for goods or services, maintain networks of friends and followers, and even search for compatible mates. Rapid and efficient transportation networks speed purchases to our door and make available fresh foods from around the world. Credit card (and soon perhaps bitcoins) are replacing cash. "Distance learning" becomes ever more common. Solar energy continues to expand its reach. Drones and robots already employed extensively surely will assume ever-greater importance in the coming years. 3-D printing, virtual reality, lasers, nanotechnology, and biotechnology have already demonstrated their value. And autonomous cars, we are told, are just around the corner. Even this brief account surely makes the case that we are in the midst of astonishing changes that are rapidly altering the way we live. It is impossible, therefore, to believe that anything like this has even happened before, that such a remarkably fruitful era of innovation characterized any comparable period in the past.

Yet a case can be made that there was such a time. The period around the turn of the twentieth century just might qualify. Consider what emerged in that era. Start with the automobile, which began hitting the roads in that first decade. Imagine the impact it had at a time when most local transportation was still dependent upon horsepower. For the first time in history, individuals could travel by themselves at unprecedented speed to distant destinations. Even more startling and unprecedented was the fact that humans learned to fly. For centuries they'd dreamed about it, experimented with achieving flight. Then the Wright Brothers and others demonstrated that it could be done. Could there be a more remarkable achievement? Back on earth there were other dramatic innovations. Consider the telephone. Voice transmission over greater and greater distances became commonplace. Social interaction and commerce advanced in ways never before possible. The transmission of electric current spread across city after city, along with the incandescent bulb. Homes could now be fully lit, streets illuminated, and a once dim, shadowy world now yielded to the light. Light transmitted through a projector also made possible the advent of motion pictures. Moving images captivated audiences in this period, the start of what would become the most popular form of entertainment the world had ever seen. Personal images made a great leap forward when Kodak began selling the Brownie camera for one dollar in 1900. By that time the phonograph, originally invented by Thomas Edison, could be found in many a home.

Did airplanes, automobiles, electric lighting, movies, etc. have as great an effect on peoples' lives as the current wave of inventions? It makes for a lively discussion. The answer is not all that obvious.

— Richard Skolnik

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Monterey's Big Dig
Route 23 Culvert Project

The select board has detailed some of the history leading to the culvert replacement project in their report on page 26. As one can see from the photos, this was a substantial project that was undertaken and accomplished in a remarkably short time frame. The inspection done earlier this year had revealed places where the gravel backfill above was visible through the ceiling of the culvert, and that the concrete was failing. According to Shawn Tryon, the old concrete box culvert was probably built in 1930s. It had only a four-foot by four-foot opening, and the cement was so poor that a large portion of it collapsed as they dug it out. The new culvert, which measures seven feet high by nine and one-half feet wide (at ten feet it would be considered a bridge), meets Department of Transportation standards, and has four times the water capacity of the old culvert. This takes a lot of pressure off the abutments during a high-water event. The prestressed, precast three-sided boxes sit on large footing blocks. The upper sections weigh nearly ten tons each, so the town rented a much larger excavator to handle the thirty-foot reach required to place these upper culvert sections. The rented excavator (shown in these pictures) weighs more than twice as much as Tryon Construction's large excavators. The work was carried out through the teamwork of the Monterey Highway Department crew and Tryon Construction, with engineering by Berkshire Geo-Technologies.

Photos by Steven Weisz and Stephen Moore

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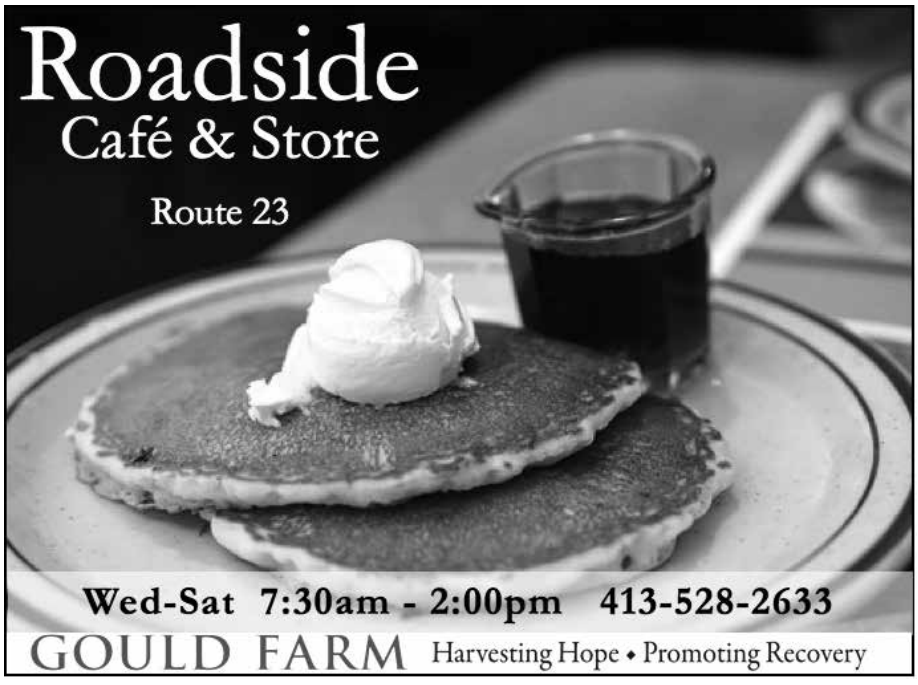


Wildlife Report,
Mid-September to Mid-October

In September Kit Patten called from Fairview Road to say there were apples on the ground but no yellow jackets at all. He found it "unnerving" to be able to pick up apples without worrying about getting stung, but then a couple of weeks later he was relieved to report his yellow jackets had shown up at last.

Maryellen Brown of Hupi Road sent a photo of a "fairy ring" of mushrooms in her yard, saying they do make you feel there could be fairies close by (see page 13). This is fortuitous or else dangerous, depending on which branch of folklore we decide to follow. Also from our Hupi Road Department of Fungus, Carol and Jim Edelman had an appearance in early October of a puffball type, as yet not specifically identified. They sent the photos below.

Larry Burke of New Marlborough called in September about a crow on one side of the house calling loudly with four "caws" in a row, then repeated. On the other side there was a reply, but always with only three caws. Larry, who wants to know what it all means, has taken up the reporting of "Our Wildlife Neighbors" in the *New Marlborough 5 Village News*. For years Jon Swan edited this department, but he lives in Maine, now. I highly recommend this feature for its wild sights and insights. I get the *NM5VN* in the mail every month, myself. Meanwhile, back in Monterey, Ed Salsitz called near the end of September, saying he had been enroute to the dump when he'd seen six turkey vultures standing in a field with their backs to the sun and their wings spread wide to catch more of the warmth.

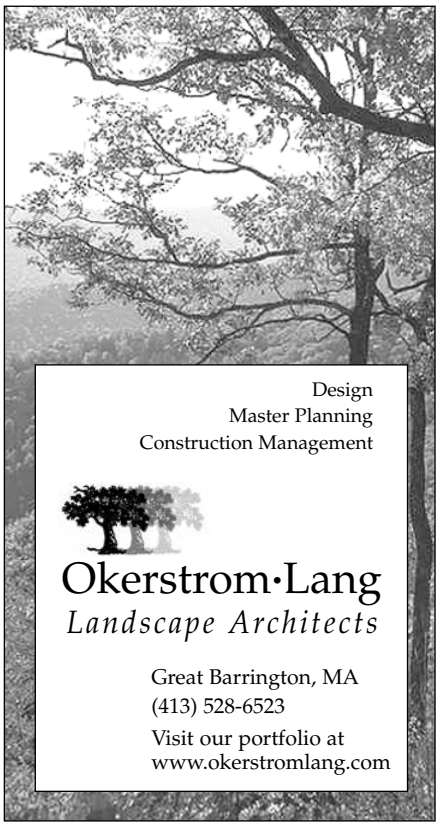
Steve Snyder wrote in the middle of October about a cow moose walking in the fields along Curtis Road, headed south. He also passed along the news that Maria Rundle had seen a big bear crossing Blue Hill Road and that Noel Wicke had watched a mother raccoon and two young ones "rolling apples around in the road." Steve says there are so many turkeys over in his part of town that "folks barely even notice anymore." I find this very hard to believe.

Michael and Maureen Banner of Griswold Road had little tree frogs climbing their window in mid-October on a rainy evening. There are two sorts of tree frogs in these parts, and the ones at the Banners' are the spring peepers we look forward to, piping in the swamps every year in early spring. See the photos on the next page.

Here on East Hupi, I found a delicate little worm snake under some mulch as I was putting the garden to bed. She is just like a ring-necked snake, but without the ring. Her belly orange, her top-side beige to brown, her length about one foot. This morning there was a high flock of crows at sunrise, fifty-six together and another five bringing up the rear, flying from the bright pink eastern horizon, headed for a new day in the west.

Thank you for your reports and photos, your wild news and views.

—Bonner McAllester
bmca@berkshire.net, 528-9385



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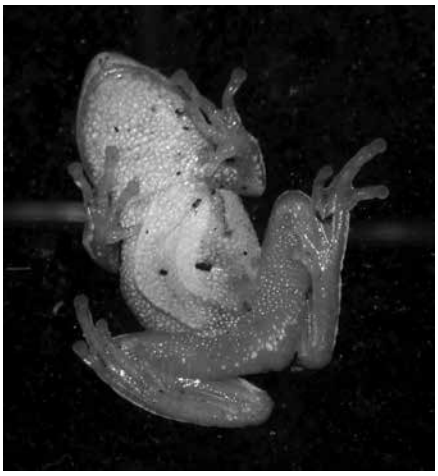

Above, spring peepers made a fall appearance on Griswold Road.
Below, some of the "three sisters" are harvested from the Bidwell House heritage garden.

October 2015 Contributors

We appreciate these contributions that have come long after our fundraising appeals. Thanks for keeping the *Monterey News* in mind.

Carol Price-Husten
Vicki Schwartz
Tracy Brennan
Mr. and Mrs. Richard Skolnik
Matthew Tannenbaum
Carol de Harak
Edward and Carolyn O'Malley
Louise Amstead
Grammatiki Anderson
Ann E. Canning

More happy (or sinister) faces from Octoberfest. Photos by Maureen Banner.

Select Board Corner

Welcome to the Select Board Corner. Our goal is to submit an article each month to the *Monterey News* to keep everyone up to date on important issues, office closings, highway projects, etc. This article may be especially important for those who cannot access our website. This is a work in progress, and we welcome any comments or suggestions on the articles.

www.MontereyMA.gov

Our town website is a great way to access information about the town.

Meetings and Events

Board of Health: Monday, November 2 and 16, at 4 p.m. Please call 528-1443 x111 to be placed on the agenda.

Conservation Commission: Tuesday, November 10, at 6 p.m.

Council on Aging: Wednesday, November 25, at 10 a.m.

Free blood pressure clinic: Berkshire VNA on Thursday, November 12, from 2 to 3 p.m. Flu shots will be available.

Foot Nurse: Thursday, November 12, 9 to 11:30 a.m., by appointment (please call 528-1443 x247). All ages are welcome.

Parks Commission: Wednesday, November 4, at 6 p.m.

Planning Board: Thursday, November 12, at 7 p.m. Please call Maggie Leonard at 528-9685 to be placed on the agenda.

Select Board: Mondays, November 2, 9, 16, 23, and 30, at 4:15 p.m. Please call 528-1443 x111 to be placed on the agenda.

Office/Town Hall Closings

Town hall will be closed Wednesday, November 11, for Veteran's Day and Thursday, November 26, for Thanksgiving.

The administrative assistant's office will be closed on November 13, November 16 through 20, and November 27.

Individual office closings are posted on the town calendar and on the department's voicemail message.

We recommend always calling ahead.

Roads and Bridges

Last June an article was published in the *Monterey News* explaining the projects the town was working on and a time line for completion. This is an update to that article and an explanation of where we're at with the projects and a new project that has come up unexpectedly.

Route 23 Culvert Project

After discovering that many of the twenty-eight culverts underneath Route 23 had not been part of the original paving plan, the town worked with the Department of Transportation to look again at the project. After inspecting the many culverts. it was determined that twenty should be replaced prior to paving the road. The budget was adjusted. and the culverts were replaced during the summer. This forced Palmer Paving, the prime contractor, to readjust the paving schedule, and a decision was made to complete the culvert project and all the retaining wall work this past summer and to reschedule the paving for next spring/summer.

Shim Paving on Route 23 and Elsewhere

In September, Route 23 was evaluated by our highway department and it was determined that there were sections that could use a top coat because of their deteriorated condition. This was not part of the paving contract but rather a way of dealing with the upcoming winter and providing residents with a safe roadway. It was also determined that the condition of the roadway would have a negative impact on our snow removal equipment far exceeding the cost of the top coating.

Route 23 Culvert Project Detour

Our sharp-eyed highway superintendent noticed a depression (that sinking feeling) in the roadway east of River Road. On closer inspection it was found that an eighty-plus year-old box culvert was failing. Although it had been on the inspection list, it was missed. It was determined that it represented a serious safety issue and was not something that could be put off. With the help of our Conservation Commission we put in an emergency order to the State Department of Environmental Protection. This was approved. We then petitioned the State Department of Transportation for permission to use a portion of our Chapter 90 grant for this project. This was also approved. By the time you read this, the new culvert will have been installed and Route 23, will be back to normal. The common theme here is that by working together, being pro-active with the various state agencies, not accepting the status quo, and understanding what we can do locally, the Town of Monterey leads not follows.

New Marlboro Road Bridge

We will be completing the final stage in the bridge saga during the first part of November. The current temporary bridge (we have purchased this bridge and will use it to replace the failing bridge on Wellman Road) will be removed and a double-wide bridge installed on permanent footings. This wider bridge will allow for the larger trucks needed to service Rawson Brook Farm, is safer, and has a life expectancy of fifty-plus years with proper maintenance. From November 2 through November 20, New Marlboro Road will be closed, with car and small truck traffic using Wallace Hall Road and large trucks being sent around to Route 57 and then down the back side of New Marlboro Road.

Highway Department Praise

The leadership and organizational skills exhibited by our highway superintendent during the above projects, along with the exceptional work performed by the town crew, certainly shows why Monterey is the best little town in Massachusetts to live in. A big thank you to all who made the projects move along so smoothly and to the patience of our residents during the construction.

—Scott Jenssen, Chair
Kenn Basler and Steve Weisz
Monterey Select Board
"Contact Us" at montereyma.gov

Calendar

Every Monday except holidays: Select Board meetings, 4:15 p.m.

Every Tuesday: Chair Yoga with Connie Wilson, 9 to 10 a.m., Monterey Town Hall. Free, sponsored by Monterey Parks Commission.

Through November 28: Knox Gallery. Ilene Spiewak's *The Color Incorrect* exhibit. See page. 5.

Tuesdays, November 3 and 10: Sewing circle, 10 to 11:30 a.m., Monterey Library.

Wednesday, November 11: Veterans Day observation, 10:40 a.m., Monterey Library. See page 7.

Thursday, November 12:

Foot care clinic, 9 to 11:30, town hall meeting room. Call Maryellen Brown 528-1598 for an appointment. Free blood pressure clinic, town hall, 2 to 3 p.m. Flu shots may be available for $25.

Tuesday, November 17: Free Leonid meteor shower, late evenings in your backyard. See page 14.

Friday, November 20: *Monterey News* deadline.

Saturday, November 21: Bidwell House Museum Colonial Thanksgiving party, 4 to 7 p.m., East Otis. See page 11.

Saturday, November 21: Lenox Contra Dance, live music by Les Z Boys—Dave Langford, guitar; Kate Barnes, piano; with calling by Sarah Van Norstrand. 8:30 to 11:30 p.m., beginners session at 8. All dances taught. Lenox Community Center, 65 Walker St. Lenox-ContraDance.org. Contact 528-4007. lenoxcontradance.org

Monday, November 23: Adult book group discussion. *Maise Dobbs*, by Jacqueline Winspear. 7:30 p.m., Monterey Library.

Thursday, November 26:Thanksgiving.

Friday, November 27: StoryCorps recording, Monterey Library. See p. 8.

Tuesday, December 1: Beekeepers workshop, Berkshire County Beekeepers. 6 p.m. Monterey Meetinghouse basement. See page 14.

Save the Dates

December 4: Knox Gallery opening for winter community exhibit, 6 to 7:30 p.m. See page 5.

December 5: Hockey rink assembly, 9:30 a.m., Fire Company pavilion.

December 12: Lake Garfield Preservation District organizational meeting, 10 a.m., church basement. See page 6.

Steven Weisz

Shawn Tryon, director of operations, doing the final smoothing in preparation for paving.

Monterey News

The *Monterey News* is an independent nonprofit corporation dedicated to fostering communication in the Monterey community. Our editorial address is PO Box 9, Monterey, MA, 01245. We invite signed letters, articles, drawings, poetry, and photographs. Submissions may also be sent to the email address below. Address requests for advertising rates and further information to the Editor, or telephone us at 413-528-4007 or email montereynews9@gmail.com.

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Roy and Felix at Octoberfest.

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Treasurer ..... Steve Pullen
Assistant Treasurer.....Felix Carroll

Contributions from local artists this month:
Hannah Bracken, p.12; George Emmons, p. 10;
Bonner McAllester, p. 10.

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